

9346

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

MISSIONARIES

TO THE

West-India^k Islands.

PRINTED AT THE

PHILANTHROPIC REFORM,

ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS.

1795.

INSTRUCTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS



INSTRUCTIONS
FOR
MISSIONARIES
TO THE
WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

I. You are to embark at the time, and in the vessel appointed by the society.

II. You are to make your way immediately to the island, where you are to be stationed as Missionary.

III. On your arrival there, you are to repair, without delay, to the town or plantation which shall be pointed out to you by the society.

IV. The object of your mission is, *to convert and instruct the adult negroe slaves, and to educate the young negroes in the British West India Islands, in the principles of the Christian Religion*; and to use your utmost and most earnest endeavours to produce in both a vital belief of the doctrines of that religion, and a constant and conscientious obedience to its laws.

V. This

V. This is to be your *sole* employment. You are not to undertake the instruction or education of any of the white inhabitants, or the free people of colour, or to interfere, in the smallest degree, with the ministerial duties of the parochial clergymen, or intercept any of their emoluments, or accept any pecuniary gratuities whatever, except what you receive from the society.

VI. You must be careful to give no offence either to the Governor, to the Legislature, to the Planters, the Clergy, or any other class of persons in the island; but to demean yourself humbly, quietly, and peaceably towards all men; not interfering in the commercial or political affairs of the island, but confining yourself entirely to the business of your mission.

VII. You must more particularly endeavour to cultivate the friendship and good-will of the parochial clergy, and entreat their advice and assistance in carrying on the great work of your mission.

VIII. You must also avoid all contests and disputes with the Missionaries of any other denomination, that may happen to be engaged in the same island, and the same undertaking with yourself: you must treat them as brother labourers in the gospel, with kindness, humanity, and Christian charity.

IX. You must never attempt to instruct or educate the negroe slaves on any plantation, without
the

the consent and approbation of the proprietor of that plantation; or if he is non-resident, of his manager.

X. Whenever any proprietor will permit you to reside on his plantation, for the purpose of instructing his negroes in religion, you are to prefer that situation to any other, and accommodate yourself with as commodious a lodging on the plantation as you can procure; but when no such permission can be obtained, you are to reside in one of the towns of the island, and teach there such negroe children as are sent to you, and go out from thence to instruct the adult negroes.

XI. When you are on a plantation in the country, you are to reside as near the church as you can, and request the use of it, both for the purpose of instructing the adult negroes on the Sundays, and for teaching the negroe children on the week-days.

XII. With respect to the adult negroes, the principal time for their instruction will probably be the Sunday evenings; at which time you will read to them such prayers, and give them such sermons or lectures as you shall be directed to use.

XIII. But it is hoped that you may have opportunities of conversing with them on religious subjects in an easy familiar way at other times, both on Sundays and after their work is finished on other days; and perhaps more good may be done

done by such conversations, than by written discourses or formal instructions.

XIV. And in order to give the greater force and efficacy to this mode of instruction, you will endeavour to conciliate as much as possible, the good-will and affection of the negroes ; you will enter into habits of acquaintance and familiarity with them, will treat them with kindness and condescension, will convince them that you are interested in their happiness and welfare, will watch the most favourable opportunities of instilling principles of virtue and religion into their hearts, will improve to the best advantage the seasons of sickness and affliction, when their minds are most open to serious impressions, and will, in short, endeavour to turn every little incident into an instrument of moral and religious improvement.

XV. It is said by those who have had much experience in the instruction and conversion of savages, and especially of the African negroes, that the surest access to their understandings is through their imaginations and their affections ; and that you can make little impression on the former, till the latter have been forcibly struck and agitated by some affecting incidents or interesting narratives. And it has been observed, that nothing has so powerfully excited their attention, and touched their hearts, as the history of our Saviour's life, miracles, sufferings, crucifixion, and resurrection, as related in the gospels.

XVI.

XVI. With these, therefore, you must begin your religious instructions, and afterwards proceed to explain, in easy, perspicuous, simple, intelligible language, some of the plainest and most important doctrines and precepts of revealed religion; dwelling most strongly and most frequently on the necessity of faith in Christ, on the benefits derived from his death, on the truth and divine authority of the scriptures, and above all, on the great practical duties of piety, mercy, justice, temperance, charity, sobriety, industry, veracity, honesty, fidelity, and obedience to their masters; contentment, patience, and resignation to the will of Heaven.

XVII. You will particularly recommend it to them, as an indispensable duty, to begin and end their day at home, with the Lord's prayer and some other short prayer, with which you will furnish them; and it is very much to be wished that the planters would permit you to assemble the negroes before they go to work in the morning, and after they have finished it at night, and to make them join with you in a short prayer, which need not exceed five minutes, and may be productive of the very best effects; because, in these short prayers might be briefly expressed some of the principal duties of a Christian life, which, by being constantly repeated, would be insensibly and deeply impressed both upon their memories and their hearts.

XVIII.

XVIII. The same good purpose might also be answered in another, and still more pleasing way. Many of the negroes have a natural turn for music, and are frequently heard to sing in their rude and artless way at their work. This propensity might easily be improved to the purposes of devotion, as well as of instruction, by furnishing the negroes with short hymns or portions of psalms, which should, like the prayers, contain some of the chief doctrines and precepts of the gospel, and should be set to plain, easy, solemn psalm tunes, as nearly resembling their own simple melody as possible. These might be used not only in the church, but when their task was finished in the field, and even might amuse them during their work, much better than light, or indecent, or profane songs. This would make them see Christianity in a much more pleasing light than they generally do; would make instruction a delight rather than a task to them, and would be found, probably, a much more effectual way of fixing their attention and improving their minds, than any other that can be devised.

XIX. You must use your best endeavours to draw off the negroes from that promiscuous and almost unbounded commerce with their women, to which they are accustomed. You must impress strongly on their minds the obligation they are under, as Christians, to confine themselves to one

wife, and to preserve inviolable fidelity to the marriage bed. You must repeat to them frequently and forcibly, that God has absolutely forbidden all uncleanness, fornication, and adultery, under pain of eternal punishment in another world; and you must quote and explain to them repeatedly, those passages of scripture which prohibit these sins. If you could bring them to a proper sense of the duty and sanctity of marriage, you would not only most essentially promote their health and comfort in this life, and their salvation in the next, but would also very materially serve the interest of their masters, by encreasing the number of their home-born slaves. For it is, on all hands, allowed that nothing so much obstructs the natural increase of the negroes, as their promiscuous intercourse with their women.

XX. You must not enter into such extreme familiarity with the negroes, as to mix with them in any *improper* amusements or festivities; nor must you suffer to pass, unproved, any sinful practice or bad habit; but at the same time, you must render yourself easy and pleasant to them, encourage them to approach you on all occasions without fear, to consult you in all points of religion, to propose to you their doubts and difficulties, and to make you the arbiter of the little disputes and differences that may arise among them.

XXI. The next object of your attention, is the education of the young negroes in the principles

ciples of the Christian religion. For this purpose, the society is of opinion, that it would be highly useful to teach them also to read; but this it recommends as a means only to that end, not as a primary and principal object in their education. The great point is to make them good Christians, in any way that is most adviseable and most practicable. The society, however, conceives, that teaching them to read would exceedingly promote this great and important purpose; for they would certainly much sooner and more effectually learn the rudiments of the Christian religion, by being able to read their Bible, and Prayer-book, and the little religious tracts which would be put into their hands, than by acquiring all their knowledge from conversation, and learning every thing by rote. Nor does there seem any just ground for those apprehensions which some of the planters are said to entertain, respecting this measure. They conceive it might make the young negroes proud and indolent, and also might enable them to imbibe, more easily, the dangerous principles of the French, by reading the pernicious publications which they disperse over the islands. But, with respect to the first objection, we find in England, that teaching the poor to read, (which is the case universally in the north) does not make them worse labourers, or less active and industrious, but the contrary; and in regard to the other point, though you may prevent their
reading

reading, you cannot prevent their *hearing* French politics, which will do full as much harm, without having those antidotes against them, which they may be furnished with if they can read. Still, however, if any proprietor disapproves of their young negroes being taught to read, it must be given up, and you must endeavour to instruct them in the rudiments of Christianity without that advantage, in the best manner you can. But it is hoped that instances of this sort will not be many; and where you cannot obtain permission to teach *all* the young negroes to read, you may, at least, perhaps, be allowed to teach two or three in the plantation, and they will be able to read good books to the rest.

XXII. At all events, you must have a school for instructing them, in such a way as is approved, in the principles of the Christian religion. It is hoped that the rector of the parish will accommodate you with his church for this purpose; but if that be attended with any inconvenience, you must then teach them at your lodging, or in some cheap building hired for that purpose.

XXIII. It is presumed you may begin to instruct the children at five or six years old; and as at that age they will not probably be employed constantly in work, you will, no doubt, be permitted to have them in the school in the intervals of that work, perhaps too, before it begins in the morning, and after it ends in the evening.

XXIV.

XXIV. When they grow more useful in the field, and cannot be well spared in the week-days, then you must teach them only on Sundays, as they do in our Sunday-schools in England.

XXV. The society is of opinion that you may be able to teach fifty children, if so many are allowed to come to you at any one time; but when a few of these are well taught, they may assist you in teaching the rest; and there are old men and women of colour, whose assistance may, if necessary, be had at a very easy rate.

XXVI. When both the adult negroes and the children, on any particular plantation, have received sufficient instruction, you must then remove to some other plantation, where the proprietor is willing to receive you; but not without first obtaining the permission of the society.

XXVII. Where it is practicable to lodge and board with the manager of the plantation, you will probably find it the most commodious and comfortable situation; and he may, if he is well disposed, be of singular use in promoting the success of your mission.

XXVIII. You are to correspond with the secretary of the society, *Mr. Thomas Porteus, No. 42, Gerrard Street, Soho, London.* You are to acquaint him with your arrival in the island, and afterwards inform him of your proceedings from time to time. At the end of every half year you must transmit to him an exact and circum-

cumstantial account of every measure that has been taken respecting the conversion, instruction, and education of the negroes; you must specify, distinctly and clearly, what number of negroes have been baptized, instructed, and made *real* converts; what number of children are in your school, and what progress they have made in reading, and in the rudiments of religion; how many hours are employed each day in teaching the children, in catechizing the youth, in giving instruction to the adult, either in the church or in private and personal conversation; whether the negroes, both adult and young, have learnt any private prayers and hymns, and make a proper use of them; whether they attend public prayers on Sundays constantly; whether they behave there decently and devoutly, and seem to attend to and understand the service, the lectures, the sermons, and all the other instructions given to them; whether they appear to be impressed with a serious and awful sense of religion, and are distinguished from the unconverted negroes, by the decency and regularity of their behaviour, and their obedience to their masters; whether, in fine, they are married to one wife, according to the rites of the church of England, and have renounced all illicit intercourse with other women; together with every other circumstance that may enable the society to judge of the progress and the real success of your mission.

XXIX. Upon the whole, your great point must be to make the negroes, under your care, not merely *nominal*, but *real* Christians. If you do this, if the planters see that those whom you have converted, instructed, or educated, are better slaves, more sober, more honest, more diligent, more faithful, more obedient, and more attached to their masters than those that remain heathens, you will be sure of their countenance, protection, and support. This is actually the case in the island of Antigua, where the negroes, converted by the Moravians, are found by experience to be the best slaves in the island, insomuch, that the planters are anxious to have the Moravians among them, and encourage them to the utmost of their power. Here, then, is the great *test* and *proof* of your zeal and diligence. If you exert yourselves effectually, you will be encouraged. If you are *not* encouraged, after a proper trial, there is ground to fear that you are, in some respects, deficient. At your first setting out, indeed, you may, perhaps, meet with some difficulties, some obstacles, and some inconveniences; but let not these dispirit or discourage you. A little prudence, a little patience, and perseverance, will, with God's grace, enable you to surmount them all. The harvest before you is a plentiful one, the work you are engaged in is a glorious one. It is nothing less than the opening of a new school of morality and religion in the Western world; laying the foundation

foundation of a new Christian Church within the confines of the Atlantic Ocean, and diffusing the blessings of the gospel to more than 500,000 human beings, with all their numberless descendants, to the remotest periods of time.

This surely is a prospect sufficient to animate your zeal, and stimulate your ambition in so noble a cause. The prayers of this society, and, we trust, of every sincere Christian, will go along with you. We shall most fervently implore the blessing of Heaven on your labours, and with that to assist and support you, we shall have the best grounds to hope that this work of God will prosper in your hands. One thing we know with *certainty*; we know from fact, and from experience, from the example of the Moravians abovementioned, that the negroes *are capable* of being made *real Christians*; and that they give the most unequivocal proofs of this, by the visible influence the gospel actually has upon their hearts and lives. The society trusts, therefore, that the Missionaries of the Church of England will not manifest less piety, less zeal, less activity, less diligence, than those of the United Brethren, and that of course their labours will, under Providence, be at least, equally successful.

FINIS.

to the respective periods of time.

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various committees of the Board of Directors of the City of New York, for the year 1901:

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY
540 EAST 57TH STREET
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637
U.S.A.

5 0059

